

COLUMBIA RIVER REGIONAL FORUM

TECHNICAL MANAGEMENT TEAM

MEETING NOTES

August 27, 2003

**CORPS OF ENGINEERS NORTHWESTERN DIVISION OFFICES – CUSTOM
HOUSE
PORTLAND, OREGON**

TMT Internet Homepage: <http://www.nwd-wc.usace.army.mil/TMT/index.html>

DRAFT

FACILITATOR'S SUMMARY NOTES ON FUTURE ACTIONS

Facilitator: Donna Silverberg

The following notes are a summary of issues that are intended to point out future actions or issues that may need further discussion at upcoming meetings. These notes are not intended to be the “record” of the meeting, only a reminder for TMT members.

Recap of IT Issue:

Scott Bettin, BPA, reported on last week's IT discussions regarding end of summer spill on the Snake River. The IT was unable to reach consensus, so BPA elevated the issue to the executive level. The Federal Executives met on Friday and drafted a letter (provided today) explaining their decision to continue spill until August 31 as stated in the BiOp for this year and develop end of spill criteria for future years. Discussions on criteria will begin during next week's IT meeting. A suggestion was made from a TMT member to include the criteria, when they are developed, in the Water Management Plan. Russ Kiefer, Idaho, raised a concern with the tone of the Executive's summary, saying that it implies unwillingness from the states and tribes to work with the Feds on this issue. The comment was duly noted by the federal TMT representatives. The Executive's summary is attached to today's agenda and posted on the TMT web site.

Dworshak Operations Update:

Cindy Henriksen, COE, reported that Dworshak is continuing to discharge 8 kcfs during the day and 5.7 kcfs at night to reach elevation 1533' at the end of August and draft to 1520' by mid-September. Outflow temperatures are ~46.5° (day) and ~43.5° (night). Jim Adams, COE, asked TMT how big a temperature fluctuation is acceptable and what the maximum day time temperature should be.

ACTION: Paul Wagner will coordinate with the Salmon Managers on these questions and get back to Jim Adams as soon as possible. An update on their recommendation will be given at the next TMT meeting.

MOP Operations:

Last week, BPA requested that the Salmon Managers discuss an end date for MOP restrictions at Little Goose, Lower Monumental and Ice Harbor. Following discussion and a caucus, the Salmon Managers present at today's TMT meeting agreed to end restrictions at midnight (0001 hours) on Sunday (8/31) at Little Goose, midnight on Monday (9/1) at Lower Monumental, and midnight on Tuesday (9/2) at Ice Harbor.

2004 Water Management Plan:

Scott Boyd, COE, distributed hard copies of the draft WMP to TMT members last week and requested that written comments be sent by September 10. TMT members listed discussion items that will be further explored at the September 3 TMT meeting:

- 5 kcfs at BON corner collector
- Libby ramp rates (10 or 5 kcfs; 1 or 2 units?)
- RSW Operations at LGR (12 vs 24 hr. spill; curtain in or out?)
- Ice Harbor operations/ research plan review
- Beginning and end of Spring/Summer spill
- Transport and 85 kcfs at Snake River projects
- Albeni Falls operations – ISAB review?
- Libby/Hungry Horse drafting strategies
- Include process issues re: potential BiOp changes?
- Research appendix
- BON flow and spill revisions
- John Day operations re: research results – placeholder?
- Spring Creek – spill or not?
- “Other Operations”
- Intro paragraph re: why things are in the WMP
- Chum planning date

*The Water Quality portion of the WMP is being revised by Jim Adams of the COE and will be reviewed by the WQT at their meeting on September 9.

Current System Conditions:

Fish: Paul Wagner reported that adult numbers began their big movement yesterday, with a large number observed at Bonneville. Adult numbers so far are lower than previous years due likely to higher temperatures. Juveniles are nearly out of the system.

Reservoir operations: Libby is drafting to 2439' by the end of August – currently at elevation 2441'. Cindy Henriksen reported that outflows will be reduced next week and Scott Bettin noted that there may be some load shaping at the project. Hungry Horse is at elevation 3540.7' and releasing 2.3 kcfs. Fires have so far not had an impact on the project. Banks Lake is close to elevation 1565'. Grand Coulee is at 1279' and should reach 1278' on Friday; the BOR plans to limit fills at Grand Coulee over the Labor Day weekend to 1' per day.

Power system: BPA requested that spill end at 6 pm on August 31. After discussions with the co-managers, the Salmon Managers recommended that spill end at midnight on the 31st.

Water quality/supply: There were a number of reported TDG exceedances at McNary and Camas/Washougal over the last two weeks due to monitor dysfunction. Jim Adams reported that the monitors have been repaired and the levels are back to normal. The water supply Jan-July average was 83% of normal, as reported at last week's TMT meeting.

CRITFC SOR C-6:

Cindy Henriksen presented an operation request from CRITFC for a Fall fishery on 8/26-30; 9/2-5; and 9/9-12. The COE has instructed the following operations:

- The Bonneville pool will be held at 75-76.5' as a hard constraint.
- The Dalles will be operated for power, so no specific instructions relative to the SOR. The COE is aware of the need for a steady pool at the project.
- John Day will be operated at a 1.5' operating range as recommended in the BiOp. The COE is aware of the need for a steady pool at the project.

Other:

September 3 meeting agenda:

- Update on Salmon Managers response re: temperatures at Dworshak
- 2004 WMP discussion

September 10 meeting agenda:

- BPA Transmission Business Line?
- RPA 143 presentation (will be on September 24)
- Usual updates, current conditions, SOR's
- Additional agenda items for the 9/10 TMT meeting should be sent to the facilitation team or Cindy Henriksen at the COE.

Meeting Minutes

1. Greeting and Introductions

The August 27, 2003 Technical Management Team meeting was chaired by Cindy Henriksen of the Corps and facilitated by Donna Silverberg. The following is a distillation, not a verbatim transcript, of items discussed at the meeting and actions taken. Anyone with questions or comments about these minutes should call Henriksen at 503/808-3945.

2. Update on Spill Issue Raised to IT at August 20 TMT Meeting.

Scott Bettin briefly recapped the spill issue raised to IT last week; he noted that, at its August 21 meeting, the IT was unable to reach consensus. The issue was then elevated to the Federal Executives. The Executives met to resolve the issue on Friday, said Bettin; their decision was to stay the course on the spill program this year, but to develop criteria for next year so that we have a clear understanding of when to start and stop spill. The bottom line is that the summer spill program will continue through August 31 this year, Bettin said. We will schedule the criteria discussion for a future TMT meeting, said Silverberg.

Russ Kiefer noted that, in his view, the written summary of the Federal Executives' discussion implied that the states and tribes were uncooperative in trying to reach consensus on an alternative operation that would provide equal or greater benefits at a lower cost. He said IDFG was unwilling to accept a model they had never seen, which seemed to mis-predict the 95% passage point about half the time. The statement to which you're referring didn't really have to do with the model, Bettin replied – it covers the entire lengthy discussion process that led up to the federal executives' decision. I hear your concern, said Silverberg; you're saying that it looks like it was your fault, and we'll bring that to the attention of those who wrote this statement.

So whose fault was it? Jim Litchfield asked. I think the point is that this could be written in such a way that fault isn't assigned, Silverberg replied. In the State of Idaho's view, there is no fault to be assigned in connection with the fact that we can't be sure 95% of the fish have passed, said Kiefer – Jim Yost's position is that the benefits of the spill program are limited, and that the money spent on spill could be better used on other mitigation efforts. It sounds, then, as though there is a disagreement between your position and Yost's, Litchfield observed. That was Jim Yost's position representing the State of Idaho at IT, Kiefer replied – my position, representing Idaho at the technical, TMT level, is that there is insufficient information to tell us whether or not the fish are gone. Henriksen noted that the Executives' statement is hot-linked to the agenda for today's meeting on the TMT homepage.

3. Dworshak Operation.

We're continuing to draft Dworshak, load-shaping with 8 Kcfs outflow during the day and 5.7 Kcfs at night, said Henriksen. We expect to reach elevation 1533' on August 31 and will draft the project to elevation 1520' by mid-September. Outflow temperature is 46 degrees during the day and 43.5 degrees at night, said Jim Adams; that range is expected to increase over time, particularly during the day, such that the diurnal fluctuation becomes larger between day and night. One question for the TMT is, what is the maximum acceptable daytime temperature? He added that the statement at last week's TMT meeting that there was only a day or two left before the Corps needed to move to undershot mode was incorrect – there are about 40 feet left to draft before we need to move to undershot-only mode, he said.

The group devoted a few minutes of discussion to the differences between overshot and undershot draft mode at Dworshak. Ultimately, Paul Wagner said there is no problem, from the salmon managers' standpoint, with the current diurnal fluctuation of 3 degrees F. in Dworshak outflow temperature. He added that he will discuss the question of a maximum daytime outflow temperature with the other salmon managers and will report back to Adams as soon as possible.

4. MOP Operation at Ice Harbor, Lower Monumental and Little Goose.

Last week, the salmon managers were asked to discuss whether we can lift the MOP restriction at the three projects, Silverberg said – what was the outcome of that discussion? We discussed that at yesterday's meeting, and our first thought was that we should watch the fish numbers for a while longer, then discuss this again at next Tuesday's meeting, said Chris Ross. MOP can be released when "small numbers" of juveniles are present, so it's a qualitative judgment call, he said. My understanding, however, is that Bonneville would like a quicker decision, and would like to reach consensus at today's meeting, if possible. We would prefer not to have a TMT meeting next week, said Bettin; our proposal would be to end MOP at Little Goose on Saturday, Lower Monumental on Sunday and Ice Harbor on Monday, to give us the full operating range at those projects.

After a brief caucus break, Wagner offered the following counterproposal: Sunday, Monday and Tuesday. We've got a deal, said Bettin – we'll lift the MOP restriction at Little Goose at midnight (0001 hours) on Sunday, at Lower Monumental at midnight on Monday and at Ice Harbor at midnight Tuesday. MOP will continue at Lower Granite into the fall. It was so agreed.

5. 2004 Water Management Plan.

We distributed hard copies of the most recent draft of the 2004 WMP at last week's meeting, said Henriksen; it is also linked to today's agenda on the TMT homepage. Written comments are due at the next TMT meeting on September 10, she said. Boyd said few comments have been received to date; he noted that there are going to be many significant issues that will need to be resolved in the 2004 Plan. The group went briefly through the draft Plan, identifying what they see as the most significant issues that will need to be addressed, including:

- Lower Granite RSW operations (12 vs. 24 hours? BGS in or out?)
- Libby/Hungry Horse ramp rates
- the water quality appendix – WQT review?
- operation of Bonneville corner collector (when should it be on and off? How to account for the 5 Kcfs that goes through it?)
- criteria for the beginning and end of spill (spring and summer)
- how to operate Ice Harbor
- the Snake River 85 Kcfs threshold issue/when to begin transport,
- winter lake level at Albeni Falls

- Libby/Hungry Horse drafting strategies
- how to incorporate potential changes to the NOAA and USFWS BiOps
- the research appendix
- flow and spill revisions
- John Day operations
- Bonneville operations
- Spring Creek hatchery releases – to spill or not to spill?
- non-BiOp operational requirements
- the introductory paragraph
- the chum planning date – criteria for the start of the chum operation

Silverberg asked the TMT participants to consider these and other issues and to come to the September 3 TMT meeting prepared to discuss them.

6. Current System Conditions.

With respect to the current status of the adult migration, Wagner said, fall chinook counts at Bonneville increased very significantly yesterday; however, the 2003 run is lagging behind 2000, 2001 and 2002 in both numbers and timing. In other words, he said, it appears that the 2003 run is just beginning in earnest. He noted that water temperatures in the Bonneville forebay have been warmer this year than in the past four years – in the 22-degree C range throughout the month of August, compared to 21-22 degrees in 2000, 2001 and 2002. What's the projection for the total seasonal count? Bettin asked. I'm not sure, but 400,000 rings a bell, said Wagner.

Moving on to Snake River subyearling fall chinook passage, said Wagner, there isn't much going on at Lower Granite; Lower Monumental shows the most action, but the daily indices for PIT-tagged wild Snake River subyearlings are in the single digits at all projects. The combined subyearling chinook indices have shown a decreasing trend through the month of August at all projects, Wagner said. Wagner also touched on the water temperature regimes at Lower Granite and the downstream projects.

Wagner noted that chum operations are on the horizon; there are no estimates of the size of the run, as yet, but the indications are that it will be a large run this year.

Moving on to reservoir operations, Henriksen said Libby is drafting toward elevation 2439' by August 31, it's at elevation 2441', currently, and releasing 14 Kcfs. We will reduce that somewhat on Sunday to avoid drafting too fast, she said; Libby is expected to release about 6 Kcfs in September. There may be some load-shaping coming up at Libby, although the ramp rates at that project will limit the magnitude of changes in outflow from that project, Bettin added.

Tony Norris said the current Hungry Horse elevation is 3540.7 feet, with outflow of 2.3 Kcfs to meet the current 4.1 Kcfs Columbia Falls minimum. The fires have not impacted Hungry Horse operations so far, he said. Banks Lake is near 1565 feet and should touch that elevation by the end of the week. Grand Coulee is at elevation 1279',

currently, and should touch 1278' on Friday. We plan to fill Grand Coulee by one foot on Saturday and Sunday, he said, and plan to refill the reservoir to elevation 1283' during September.

Power system? Silverberg asked. The power system is fine so far; the lights are still on, Bettin said. With respect to the end of the summer spill program, said Bettin, normally we would end spill at 6 p.m. on August 31 and would like to do so again this year. Wagner said he had discussed this issue with others at NOAA Fisheries; we would prefer that spill continue until midnight on August 31 at all four projects, he said.

Jim Adams said there have been a number of water quality exceedences recorded, particularly at the McNary Washington-side monitor and camas Washougal, over the past week; those TDG exceedences were due to monitor malfunction. That problem has now been corrected, Adams said.

7. New System Operational Requests.

On August 27, the action agencies received SOR 2003 C-6. This SOR, developed and supported by the Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission, requests that the following specific operations be implemented as a hard constraint:

- August 26, 6 a.m. through August 30, 6 p.m.
- September 2, 6 a.m. through September 5, 6 p.m.
- September 9, 6 a.m. through September 12 6 p.m.
- Bonneville Pool: operate the pool within 1 foot from full pool (msl elevation 76.5-75.5)
- The Dalles pool: operate the pool within 1 foot (msl elevation 159.5-158.5)
- John Day pool: operate the pool within 1 foot (msl elevation 264.5-263.5)

The TMT went briefly through the contents of this SOR. Henriksen said the Corps has issued instructions to Bonneville Dam to maintain a pool elevation between 75 and 76.5. The soft constraint is a one-foot range between 75.5 and 76.5, Henriksen said. We're aware of the need at The Dalles pool, but that pool's operating range is three feet and rarely uses all of it. There is already a 1.5-foot operating range in place at John Day, and it seldom fluctuates more than one foot at this time of year, she said. Kyle Martin would also like you to know that these fish are for sale for \$2 per pound at Cascade Locks, Bettin said.

8. Recommended Operations.

Recommended operations were discussed during a previous agenda item.

9. Next TMT Meeting Date.

The next meeting of the Technical Management Team was set for Wednesday, September 3; the primary purpose of this meeting is to discuss the 2004 Water Management Plan. Meeting summary prepared by Jeff Kuechle.

TMT PARTICIPANT LIST
August 27, 2003

Name	Affiliation
Donna Silverberg	Facilitation Team
Paul Wagner	NOAA Fisheries
Russ Kiefer	IDFG
Tony Norris	USBR
Cindy Henriksen	COE
Mary Karen Scullion	COE
Rudd Turner	COE
Russ George	WMCI
David Benner	FPC
Robin Harkless	Facilitation Team
Kevin Nordt	PGE
Tim Heizenrater	PPM
Scott Bettin	BPA
Chris Ross	NOAA Fisheries
Julie Ammann	COE
Nancy Yun	COE
Scott Boyd	COE
John Wellschlager	BPA
Jim Adams	COE
Jim Litchfield	Consultant (Montana)
Nick Lane	BPA
Randy Wortman	COE
Tina Lundell	COE
Colin Beam	PPM
Mike Butchko	Powerex

Tom Haymaker	PNGC
Martin Hatscher	SCL
Bill Rudolph	NWFL
Margaret Filardo	FPC
Lance Elias	PPL
Mike O'Bryant	CBB
Glenn Traeger	Avista Energy
Tom Le	PSE